

Do not forget

them: Dr M

QUOTE

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JOHORE BARU, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today drew the attention of Umno to the great number of sympathisers and silent supporters of the party who, directly or indirectly, had ensured its survival.

These people may not be active members, but Umno should pay attention to them, he said at the opening of the Johore Baru Umno division delegates conference.

Umno, he warned, should not make foes of these people because then, they would shift their sympathy and support to other parties.

"If this happens, it will be a difficult task for Umno to continue with its struggles and ideals," added Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who came specially to open the conference.

Radical changes

He told the 1,000 members that Umno's struggles are all-embracing, covering the interests of all.

Sometimes Umno's actions give the impression that the party is sidestepping its interests or neglecting the interests of members.

He reminded members that the party is strong because others, the sympathisers and the silent supporters, are behind it and these are the people to whom Umno has to give more consideration so that they will not shift their allegiance to others.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, also said Umno is undergoing radical changes and every member should be prepared to change in line with developments.

The changes may be disastrous and some may be beneficial, only time can tell, he said, adding that the important thing is for members to accept the changes and be prepared to face up to them although to some, the changes may be a bitter pill to swallow.

"While we need to change, the party does not need crises," he said, referring to the coming elections of its Youth and Wanita movements.

The party can only avoid crises if members do not get emotional over impending changes and thus lose sight of the party's fundamental objectives.

A change in leadership is inevitable because present leaders do not last forever and Umno, as a disciplined party and one that moves within its constitution, needs to have new leaders to take over the reins.

Advising members to adhere to the party's constitution and act within the laid-down procedures and regulations, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said there is no point if a personality won an election, but his victory caused a split within the ranks.